Rome awards five-year contract to California-firm

by Francis L. Crumb, Information Directorate

ROME, N.Y. — The Air Force Research Laboratory's Information Directorate has awarded a contract to SRI International of Menlo Park, Calif.

The five-year agreement, "STU: The Strategic Testbed Utility," is funded by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency or DARPA of Arlington, Va., in support of the Real-World Reasoning program from the Information Processing Technology Office (IPTO). The program's goal is to develop foundations, technologies, and tools to enable effective, practical automated reasoning of the scale and complexity required for computers to perform complex tasks in the real world requiring intelligence. The agreement is over three phases, with project evaluation built into each phase. If all phases are funded, the award could be worth up to $9,030,288.

"SRI researchers will develop a new theory of dynamic gaming and a scenario-based strategic testbed for planning, training and analysis," said Roger J. Dziegiel Jr., program manager in the directorate's Information Technology Division. "Today's computers can play chess, but will they be able to play DARPA chess with many players, or in general, multi-player games with strategic and coalition-forming aspects."

"This technology is envisioned to increase the military's ability to improve automated reasoning in the field of logistics, as well as vast improvement in wargaming simulations," Mr. Dziegiel said.

The DARPA IPTO office envisions a future "cognitive system" that will be able to reason in a variety of ways, learn from experience, and adapt to surprises. Such a system would be aware of its behavior and be able to explain itself. It would also be able to anticipate different scenarios and predict and plan for novel futures. @